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April 29, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. J. LEE RANKIN, General Counsel

FROM: Howard P. Willens

RE: Commission Files

After our staff meeting last Friday and subsequent discussions regarding this subject, I initiated efforts to resurrect our filing system. This is in the nature of a progress report.

On Friday and Saturday I familiarized myself with the current status of the filing system and the progress being made. I discovered that Mrs. McCall was the only person actually working on the sending and classifying of the FBI reports. She was progressing at the rate of approximately 100-150 pages per day, and had worked her way up to Commission No. 75. Because she was required to do her own Xeroxing she was unable to do a greater number of pages per day. In addition, I noted that she was making a superfluous number of pages of each report. I also talked briefly with Mr. Moore, one of the two additional people from Archives recently assigned to the Commission, and discovered that he (GS-11) was principally engaged in filing the reports after they had been classified and Xeroxed by Mrs. McCall. The other person from Archives, Mrs. Johnson, was engaged in reading and classifying the correspondence from the FBI.

Based on this information I took the following action initially. I gave Mrs. McCall a list of approximately ten (10) Commission document numbers, principally the Oswald/Ruth reports, and indicated these were of the highest priority and should be done next. I discussed with Mrs. McCall her suggestions to improve the system. I discussed with Mr. Moore suggestions regarding

improvements in the system and asked Mr. Moore to have Mr. Stevens call me Monday morning. I contacted Assistant Attorney General Miller, described our plight and asked him to get additional clerks. He promised to call Immigration Service.

On Monday morning you and I met with Mr. Stevens at approximately 10:00 a.m. After this conversation, I believe Mr. Stevens was officially on notice that the Commission was not satisfied with the work and production on this project. In subsequent conversation with Mr. Stevens I asked that space be provided at the Archives Building and that he contribute at least three additional people to be assigned to this project. He stated that he would. He did indicate to me that he planned to be out of town beginning May 5 for approximately three weeks, but that one of his associates would be in a position to supervise the project in his absence. He subsequently told me that space could be made available in Archives. On Tuesday I learned that Immigration, in response to Mr. Miller's request and my subsequent discussions with I & N officials, was going to supply us three file clerks. Two of these, Mr. David P. Lain and Mrs. Vaughale Lowry, reported for duty Wednesday morning and the third, Olga Hill, will report for duty Thursday. These three, plus Mr. Moore, Mrs. Johnson and other Archives personnel to be assigned, will work at the Archives Building.

I have made it clear in my conversations with everyone, that I expect this job to be done by June 1, 1964. I have asked that I have a weekly report on the documents completely duplicated and filed. I have asked to be notified when the current list of priority documents is completed so that I can give an additional list for classification, duplication and filing. I would be more optimistic on this subject if our experience with Archives had been any different in the past. I shall keep in closer touch with this project and report to you regularly.